



21st Theater Sustainment Command
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16th Sust. Bde. Soldiers welcome new commander

By Staff Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

BAMBERG, Germany — Col. Martin B. Pitts, outgoing commander, 16th Sustainment Brigade, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, said farewell to the Soldiers and Families of the logistics brigade, and welcomed the incoming commander, Col. Keith Sledd, during a change of command ceremony at the Freedom Fitness Facility here Dec. 16.

Pitts told Soldiers that it was an honor and a privilege to have served with them, and he was proud to share in the many accomplishments of the young unit.

“You bore the brunt of our brigade’s simultaneous transformation and ramp-up for our combat deployment and delivered unmatched, world-class sustainment to an area the size of the state of Pennsylvania, while facing an adaptive enemy and in the midst of the implementation of the comprehensive Iraqi Security Agreement,” said Pitts.

The 16th Sust. Bde., the only sustainment brigade in Europe, stood up July 16, 2007, and deployed to northern Iraq in July 2008. The unit was one of the last units in Iraq to deploy for 15-months.

Pitts highlighted some of the accomplishments of “Knight Warrior” Soldiers in Iraq, including setting up thousands of meters of concertina wire for the historic provincial elections of 2009; training Iraqi army Soldiers to repair vehicles, weapons and

equipment; setting up repair centers, warehouses and distribution systems on Iraqi Army bases; and rebuilding water infrastructure in the drought-prone Ninawa province.

Soldiers from the 16th Sust. Bde. conducted more than 8,000 convoys in Iraq, providing sustainment support to U.S. and coalition forces, including more than 150 million gallons of fuel; 11,000 tons of rations; and 10 million cases of bottled water. Guest Speaker Maj. Gen. Patricia E. McQuiston, commanding general, 21st TSC, congratulated Pitts and the Soldiers of the 16th Sust. Bde. for their accomplishments.

“I thank you all for your service to our nation and for your service in promoting a free and democratic government in Iraq,” said McQuiston. “Your extraordinary contributions have paved the way for our future, and eventual mission accomplishment in Iraq.”

McQuiston said the brigade’s efforts were essential to the Army’s mission in northern Iraq.

“The brigade was critical in assisting both the 1st Armored Division and the 25th Infantry Division in maintaining a 96 percent readiness rate on more than 21,000 combat systems by managing three direct support maintenance facilities that completed over 14,000 work orders,” said McQuiston.

McQuiston said she was saying farewell to Pitts, but also welcoming him. Pitts will move on to the 21st TSC.

Sledd, who served as the director of plans and operations at the Army Sustainment Command, Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., prior to assuming command of the 16th Sust. Bde., said he was proud to lead the 16th Sust. Bde.

“I would like to thank the great Soldiers standing before us today who represent the next ‘greatest generation,’ who have volunteered to carry the load and defend our nation,” said Sledd.

Sledd is married to the former Wendy Rene Droze of Crowder, Okla., and they have a 27-year-old daughter, Jennifer. Wendy Sledd was named the 2007 U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt “Outstanding Agency Volunteer of the Year,” and the 2008 Schweinfurt “Family Readiness Group Volunteer of the Year” and is a recipient of the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal.



Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer (left), command sergeant major, 16th Sustainment Brigade, accepts the brigade colors from Col. Keith Sledd (facing away), incoming commander, 16th Sust. Bde., during a change of command ceremony at the Freedom Fitness Facility, Bamberg, Germany, Dec. 16. Sledd takes over for Col. Martin B. Pitts (second from right), outgoing commander, 16th Sust. Bde. Pitts led the 16th Sust. Bde., the only sustainment brigade in Europe, from activation July 16, 2007, through a 15-month deployment to northern Iraq, and through redeployment and reintegration. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)